

Landscape: Mediated Views

**VSW Gallery Viewing Room
January 30, - April 3, 1998**

**Peer Bode Barbara Buckner Michael Camoin Phil Jones Jeffery Lerer
Kristin Lucas Mary Lucier Branda Miller John Orentlicher
Dave Ryan Steina Vasutka Woody Vasutka Bill Viola**

**Curated by Sherry Miller Hocking
Produced by The Media Center @ VSW**

Landscape: Mediated Views

"Landscapes are culture before they are nature, constructs of the imagination projected onto wood and water and rock." Simon Schama *Landscape and Memory* (NY: Vintage Books, 1995) Landscape is a mental construct, although we tend to view it as faithfully representing a separate world outside us. We compose landscape in many ways: by naming, by identifying place, and also by re-presenting these views and composing frames through intervention with a variety of media.

Traditional landscape painting was often viewed as a visually literal, now photographic-like, documentation of the spectacular and the sensational subject, the land "out there". As a window to the outside world, landscape is an opening through which we as viewers can confront an exterior reality. In its representation, landscape is a way of confirming the reality of the outside and of confining the vast to a more human scale, of taming.

As, instead, a window to the inside world, landscape presents a view of the mind of the maker. Landscape transcends the concept of exterior space, and intertwines itself with human culture - our thoughts, ideas, memory. As metaphor, landscape dramatizes myth and reveals the spiritual in nature. As metaphor, landscape alters the ways people think and act. A small portable mirror backed with foil and sometimes tinted, the Claude glass was carried in the 18th century by artists and tourists and used as a framing device to define the ideal view. The picturesque could then be drawn or painted, but frequently was composed solely to be appreciated. The framing was a deliberate human process of perception and idealism, a matter of choice, and imbedded in conceptions of metaphor, culture, memory and desire.

Once a technology is introduced into a culture, it can't be withdrawn, and it changes irrevocably the landscape of the culture itself. In the late 60s when electronic video technology was first introduced to the mass market, artists were concerned with the phenomenology of the medium, with the processes as well as the product, with the invention of the form. As a formal medium, video confirms our belief in the reality of nature "out there", inviting us to frame and document it. The portability of the first video tools freed many artists to explore and portray the outside world with a tool heretofore largely restricted to interior spaces.

At the same time and paradoxically video challenged conceptions of illusionistic representation and traditional figure-based imagery. The tool set allows us to mix mutually exclusive views of the exterior world. We are creating the illusion of a document using electronic particles, sweeping in a line across a screen, never containing at any single moment even a single whole image.

As a technological medium, video is both camera-based and non-camera based. While it can seemingly capture outside reality through the optics of the camera lens, it also creates its own electronic landscape, free from traditional natural images.

Electronic media stand in the logical evolutionary progression of imaging devices, which help to nurture the illusion of a seamless shared reality "out there", and of our perceptions as passive receptors of this external reality. But because as a medium it is also able to create images sui generis, it frees landscape from representation. These portable new media do not insist on a fixed unvarying perspective; camera-based images can be combined with, modified by or supplanted altogether by the invented, the video/digital image.

As processors of the image, video tools call into question illusionistic photographic representation and in this way redefine space and landscape.

Electronic media can map exterior as well as interior spaces and people's places within the landscape. By the act of representing the landscape, we change it.

What do the works which define Landscape: Mediated Views themselves portray ?

The landscape of geography, of external space. How landscape effects cultures, contributes to wealth, disrupts communication, creates hardships or isolation.

The landscape of geology and the absence of human history, the immensity of scale and revelations of age.

The landscape of world culture and human activity and the evolution of these throughout history.

The landscape of narrative and text; the ways people tell stories to create a human culture and mythology and to exert control over their surroundings.

The landscape of image and picture.

The landscape of interior human spaces, of memory and dream, of spirit and family. How the metaphors of landscape in cultures influence how we perceive and understand the land and our place in it.

The landscape of intimate spaces.

The landscape of metaphor.

The landscape of human history, and its convergence with natural history; how history is mediated by the processes of representation and reproduction in our attempts to capture history through technology. The landscape of media itself and of information systems in a wired world. The landscape of the urban environment and the information superhighways bisecting it.

The landscape of media and representation, how landscape is remapped by machine. How we come to question what is real within the limits of human perception and image representation.

The landscape of public policy and environmental land use. When public and private landscapes collide, the sublime and the ideal can become a threat and an enemy. How land is destroyed by the marketplace and ironically sometimes by efforts to protect it.

Landscape was one of the earliest forms explored by those artists who first worked with electronic media; as subject it was just outside the door or down the street, and it was all accessible with the new portable systems. It was also internal to the apparatus and created within the electronic workings of the tools. Landscape remains a subject of media artists today, and the history of work done by those who have gone before is contained within the work now being created.

The artists in this exhibition illustrate some of the many ways electronic media makers have looked at issues of landscape throughout the nearly 30 year history of the medium. Using first the black and white portable video systems and now the new digital technologies, media works addressing landscape and land use document the ways in which media alter landscape and also represent the complexities which are fundamental to our relationship with nature.

The tapes in this exhibition stand not just in acknowledgment of what we have lost in our relationship with the landscape and what we have destroyed, but also of what we can discover, can dream and can create.

Sherry Miller Hocking

Program One

January 30 - February 5, 1998

Memory Box	3:05	1993
Memory Box II & III	6:02	1995
Iron Horse	0:42	1997
by Jeffrey Lerer		

Overview: As a visual artist, grappling with time-base and technical innovation has been an inescapable reality. Starting as a painter in the 1960's, my commitment to traditional art materials and formal concerns became clearly established. However, by the early 1980's I was most interested in moving my project designs and general concepts to time-base, most essentially electronic media. That move encompassed a very profound series of changes in my life and the script for Memory Box emerged.

Designed as a trilogy, the initial chapter of Memory Box introduces the viewer to a machine on a stage. The machine can sample photos and construct fragments of memory. Paint on glass, photography and analog video animation are the principal tools used in executing Memory Box I. As we move to Memory Box II & III, the complexity of imagery, and the technological sophistication used to generate the animation, increases as the time frame moves through the 70's, 80's and into the 90's. However, though the technology used is increasingly complex it does not replace other mediums, nor does it imply superiority in its own right. Once a medium makes its entrance into the progression of Memory Box it remains present throughout the rest of the work. References to surrounding socio-political events, continuous media information flow and my evolving identity provide the framework within which the principal narrative develops. Embedding the narrative in a rich layering of continuous visual metamorphosis maintains the work as an art object, in very much the same way a painting reaches a level of overall tonal control. In Memory Box II & III the same machine is made more complex in order to enable it to process the increasing amount of information. Stage right, top and back are now able to provide information. Behind the curtains, which were never drawn back in Memory Box I, there are transparent walls that allow for film projection, video display, and 2D/3D computer animation, all of which serve as inter-active backdrops to Memory Box's central sampling activities. A tenuous balance is established between **adapt and change** and the threat of **overload**. As the information flow increases, the logical processing activity of the box struggles to maintain order amid increasing chaos. The Trilogy should provide a very energetic viewing for all survivors of The Great Media Crash. The three levels form a 10 minute (estimated) piece.

A internal mental landscape, Memory Box serves well to represent the ever-present dilemma of control or lack of same; the irony being, that both are necessary and interchangeable, but often not at will, and sometimes it is hard to tell which is which.

Iron Horse

Subverting landscape and object, Iron Horse speaks directly of a strong connection I feel to the work of Rene Magritte. It was executed entirely within the computer utilizing Softimage Extreme as the 3D platform and various 2D imaging softwares as map generators.

Host	7:36	1997
by Kristin Lucas		

I unravel the complexity of my relationship as a woman toward the electronic dream by staging virtual interactions with mediated devices, such as automated tellers, arcade games, and the world wide web. These interactions manifest in the form of performance and single channel video. My intention is to shift the viewer's focus away from the hypnotic blackbox (television or cinema) and into the public realm.

In Host (1997), a young woman logs into an on-line therapy session hosted by the system operator of a streetside multi-media kiosk. Under the eye of surveillance, the user navigates her way through automated menu options, control panel at her side. The contemporary explorer (cowgirl) does not need to mark her own trail, the system in power does this for her—constantly updating an account of her interactivities. The system operator is capable of multi-tasking like a computer—moderating the flow of traffic over the internet, simultaneously monitoring all aspects of the broadcast.

As new technologies emerge, women are more likely to be placed in control of the operation of these mechanisms, than involved with their initial development. Following suit, we adapt to the times by upgrading our systems with plug-ins and peripherals. Milestones remain to be seen in the so-called genderless society. My script dismantles the concept of the modular databody with dry humor, satirizing relationships between body and machine that are inherent within technical language (aging/obsolescence, implants/upgrades, amnesia/memory loss). I have built technical problems (as content) into my script. They are grounding points, links between body and ephemeral. They provide the foundation for a critique over the mind and body split synonymous with cyberspace interactivity.

**A Few More Magic Words
by Peer Bode**

20:00

1993

An accumulation of occurrences ...

- the spoken voice reinterpreting stone petroglyphs.
- meandering across a find of electronic ruins (bodies?).
- text questionings across unknown cultures and bodies.

" are you Micmac
I am not Micmac
I am German and Norwegian
you are Micmac
then you can read this
I don't know what songs you sing ... "
(text over Micmac symbols for "I, you, them")

- symbols, text, layers
- electronic reinscriptions
- stone petroglyphs reappearing in silence and then reinterpreted
this time by a narration spoken by a computer voice.
Who is speaking these questions of origins and identity?

Stones, bodies, electronic signals, video, digital, hand written
text, sound, voice, and computer dictation ...

A production and feedback of materially different inscriptions
voicing back and forth between writing and bodies.

A struggle to reach across distances and to integrate critical
issues and desires. Attempts at new perspectives on the corporeal body
including visual adventure, experimentation and pleasure.

Video as body inscription revival. Video as corporeally active,
proudly polymorphously bisexual. The stuff of bad girl/boy imagists.

Ohio To Giverny
by Mary Lucier

19:00

1983

The work is an investigation of light in landscape and its function as an agent of memory, both personal and mythic. It deals with the convergence of disparate entities-geographies, periods in time, sensibilities; with transitions from one state of being to another; and how, within the frame of imagination and collective memory, these "dissolves" take place. It is structured as a journey of the camera from rural Ohio to Giverny, in France. In this adventure, landscape is the sole protagonist: articulated by changing light and by camera movement, animated by highly pictorial sound, and made poignant by the very absence of inhabitants. References to the motifs of Monet function throughout as the "art historical" memory, underlying the more personal evocation of French and American personae.

Program Two

February 8 - 12, 1986

Conflations of Memory (One)
by John Orentlicher

28:00

1991

Conflations of memory cores is the first in a series of tapes which deal with the artists personal experiences meshed with the lives of the people of the Chilean Patagonia. The tape was conceived as an introduction to a place, time and set of events which explore aspects of memory tied to the landscape. Through storytelling, the landscape becomes a determinant factor in the life cycle of the people who inhabit this remote area of the world. Visualization of this landscape is structured symbolically and metaphorically in between the memories of the participants to emphasize the scale and dominance of the physicality of the Patagonia.

Program Three

February 13 - 19, 1986

Witness To The Future
by Branda Miller

50:00

1996

Witness to the Future is an experimental documentary by Branda Miller which portrays the hidden landscape of America lying just beneath the advertised glitz and stereotypical images of suburban ideals, technological mastery and patriotic splendor. Revealing the scared and smokey landscapes of three regions devastated by environmental disaster, Witness to the Future focuses on stories of witnesses responding to environmental catastrophes in three communities: a chilling landscape of a nuclear weapons industry town, near the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Hanford, Washington; apocalyptic visions of strings of industrial plants dumping chemicals into the Mississippi River and brewing a "toxic gumbó" in the Bayou in "Cancer Alley", Louisiana; and seemingly idyllic farmland regions where pesticide seeps not only into workplace but playgrounds and kitchen sinks.

The "downwinders" of the nuclear weapons industry town, near the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Hanford, Washington, are mainly a working class community; they are patriotic, many strongly anti-environmental, who believed in the atomic industry and their government which brought them to Hanford in the 1940's. In the town sits the Atomic Bowling Alley and the Atomic Cafe; the Richland High School football team's symbol is a mushroom cloud. For a long time, the "downwinders" within a broad radius of the plant have suffered from cancer and mysterious illnesses. Finally the government released statistics to confirm the "downwinders" worst fears: they have been exposed to the most massive radiation releases in U.S. history, as part of a secret government experiment. Iodine used in the production of plutonium bombs landed on vegetation downwind from the plant and was eaten by cows, posing the greatest risk to the children who drank the milk. Pauline Echo-Hawk, a Wannapum Native American from the area whose sacred mountain was cored by the Hanford Nuclear Reactor, says with great dignity and grief "I think the hardest thing, I think, for our people to really face, is what it's doing to Mother Earth, what it's doing to the land, because she's a living person."

In "Cancer Alley", along the Mississippi River "Bayou", the predominantly black and poor communities of Ascension Parish, Louisiana, have suffered from mysterious skin rashes, sinus headaches, birth defects and cancer. "You ought to see this place at night," Amos Favorite said with a shake of the head. "When these companies burn off their waste the air lights up like a battlefield. I'm telling you, it's scary. Nighttime around here is like an evil dream." He concludes, "The ordinary person who works the fields or walks the streets, who has to live everyday with this mess, he's the warrior of the future. He's got the power to save the world. He's the real environmentalist."

The mainly Hispanic-American population of San Joaquin Valley, California, has realized that the water they drink and the land their homes sit on is killing them. Camilla Yarborough-Nunes says, "When we moved here, we saw the lush green mountains, the whole beautiful scenery, and fresh fruits and vegetables down the street, we did not think there was a problem whatsoever.... We were not told of the agricultural spraying, we were definitely not told about the chemicals." Marta Salinas, in a walking tour of her "Childhood Cancer Cluster" neighborhood, points to home after home where people have suffered from cancer, miscarriages and birth defects, stating "The people of McFarland are the victims of a silent holocaust. The plague we're suffering affects everyone in America who eats a fruit or vegetable or nut harvested in the San Joaquin Valley. There's a link here that joins everyone together, from the Mexican worker to the millionaire who eats grapes with his cereal."

An extraordinary portrayal of the transformation of "ordinary" citizens into environmental activists. Witness to the Futura documents these struggles of citizen activists against radioactive waste contamination, pesticides, and toxic chemicals. In order to protect their families and homes, citizens representing a diversity of voices including workers and mothers, whistleblowers and farmworkers, African American, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans, are forced to become their own best experts to protect their own back yards. They discover that by working with their neighbors in a unified effort they can better address the threat to their homes, communities, and landscapes.

Program Four

February 20 - 26, 1998

Inside The Blue Line by Mike Camoin

59:30

1996

This is the story of 67 year-old Jack Leadley - hunter, fisherman, trapper, artisan, and carpenter -- and his struggle against man and nature in Northern New York's Adirondack Mountain preserve, North America's version of the Rain Forest. Told as a highly personal feature-length documentary by independent filmmaker and narrator Mike Camoin, utilizing on-site interviews with Leadley and his family, it recalls Leadley's arrival and initial idyllic existence in a mountainous wilderness. Using never before seen footage of the survival of man in the rawest of elements, including 1930's home movies, it displays the Adirondack Mountains' heavenly peacefulness and unprotected treachery.

Leadley and his wife learn how to eke out an existence, partners with the land and with the animals which surround them. By respecting his environment, without waste, he hunts, traps, and fishes to feed himself and his family. For shelter he builds a home with timbers from the 1952 "blow-down". For trade he makes maple syrup, rustic furniture, pack baskets and oil paintings, following hundreds of years of indigenous custom.

This wise-use existence becomes threatened, though, not by nature, but by the laws of man. The Blue Line, an actual line drawn on a map in 1892, was meant to preserve and protect the mountains, lakes and wildlife in the Adirondacks, the largest forest preserve in the world. The film documents the harm done, in more recent times by State bureaucrats sitting behind their desks in Albany, in the name of preservation. It also suggests the ultimate irony -- the furthering of these "environmentally protective" policies by legislators and governmental administrators in urban areas like New York City, where nature long ago gave way to concrete and steel.

The well-documented result of this "protection" is a major decrease in the deer population with a resultant hunter withdrawal, economically devastating the area; the State's destruction of the Leadley's and 17 other family hunting camps; the closing of the fire tower; the burning of the ranger station; and the near destruction of the Leadleys' heritage.

Refusing to give up, ironically saved from a near-fatal heart attack by high-tech health care, Leadley perseveres. He protests the actions of the State in his column in the Hamilton County Newspaper, documenting the official misdeeds and organizing others to speak out. He is awarded 1995 Adirondack Citizen of the Year.

Thus, "Inside the Blue Line: Leadley's Legacy" employs the classic themes of man against man, man conquering nature, and man surviving hardship in time to make a difference in the world he knows better than all others. It is an inspiring and uplifting film.

Program Five

February 27 - March 5, 1998

Asylum (A Romance) by Mary Lucler

11:48

1988

The videotape which supplies the pulse of the work is a visual and auditory rumination on energy and entropy. It looks at the production and consumption of thermodynamic power as a fundamental rhythm of industry and nature, alternating images of the active with the inert, the live with the moribund, the benign with the malignant.

The structures of production and the by-products of their decay demonstrate a marked ability to seduce us with a morbid beauty. Asylum seeks a neutral zone where the thrill (or threat) of an engine at full throttle is offset by the melancholy (but comforting) lesson of decrepitude -- a kind of salvation in rust.

Rarefaction

9:30

1997

by Dave Ryan

I like to see my work as a triangulation in progress - the process of figuring one's own location in a landscape on the move. It requires two distant landmarks and a straight edge. In one direction lies a large ambiguous lump of personal experience - the observed, the remembered, the indoctrinated, the suppressed, the forgotten. Another direction provides a second reference - a mountainous accumulation of discarded (though still moving) images - a tangle of traditions, contacts, histories. The works emerge out of the intersection of lines through these reference points. They begin as tentative forays and evolve into puzzles: puzzles that can only be solved by the interaction between personal experience and formal practice. It is my hope that those who engage the works recognize some aspects of these puzzles, look to their own reference points and take up the process for themselves.

Rarefaction is the result of a collision between two separate pieces: an abandoned project about turnpike billboards that had lost their meaning to the pure velocity of passers-by, and footage gathered for a project about the empty orchestration of the Tokyo transit system. These came together when I was awoken one night by my wife's somnambulant Japanese - the leap of language out of kilter with the place, a sudden disjunction of a transient here and intangible there. By bringing these pieces together, I wanted to expand on the immigrant experience of disorientation to see what light it would throw on our culture of transience.

Summer Salt

15:00

1981

Bad

2:00

1979

Urban Episodes

10:00

1980

by Steina

Steina's works from the late 1970's and the early 1980's are exercises in the phenomenology of vision and the redefinition of space and landscape, as articulated through mechanized, optical and electronic devices. Bad is a technical exploration of several commands in the Vasulkas' Buffer Oriented Digital Device, which controls digital imaging functions such as up/down and right/left movement, as well as the stretching and squeezing of the image. Steina uses her own face as visual material, rhythmically dismantling and reconstructing her self-image. Urban Episodes is a striking phenomenological study in an urban landscape, an exhilarating restructuring of physical space that defies expected modes of seeing and laws of gravity and reflection. In a public plaza in Minneapolis, Steina set up a motorized, rotating Machine Vision device, which includes mirrors and two cameras that pan, tilt and zoom. Summer Salt is a dramatic exploration of the phenomenology of space and vision, as Steina uses

mechanical and electronic devices to physically investigate the Southwestern landscape. This artificial vision allows the viewer altered perceptions and spatial perspectives. The five segments include dynamic exercises with Steina's mirrored globe, the physicality of unexpected camera placement, and electronic manipulation of the textures and colors of the landscape.

from EAI Catalog

Summer Salt marks for Steina a continuing of the phenomenology of space, yet with a shift in image material. Here, Steina transposes her explorations of "Machine Vision" from her studio to the landscape of New Mexico, to her backyard's realm of earth and sky. *Summer Salt* is emblematic of her melding of self-humor and physical jokes with systematic reconfigurings of the physical within the electronic. This work is an exploration of physicality - the body within the camera frame, the actual body of the camera itself, and the physicality of material space within the spheres of electronic space.

Each section of the videotape builds upon the previous one to create an increasingly multifaceted sense of spatial dimensions. In *Sky High*, the camera is attached to the roof of a moving car with a mirrored lens that creates close to a 360-degree "distortion" of the New Mexican sky, curved into a spherical merging of landscape and horizon. *Low Ride* takes the camera to the opposite extreme, with it strapped to the front bumper of the car as it drives through desert bush. The bumping, scraping and scratching of the body of the camera itself, with its built-in microphone, banging into its subject matter - an aspect of camera-generated images that is usually hidden from the image. In *Somersault*, Steina playfully does gymnastics with her camera and its mirrored lens attachment as a means of producing a 360-degree image of a torso wrapped around the camera lens. As she spins the camera and bounces it off her hips in a humorous joke on the material nature of the camera, she creates a kind of slapstick about the notion of the camera as an extension of the body. *Rest* allows the camera to rest in a hammock, exhausted, in effect, from its physical exertions, as Steina digitally refigures the surrounding trees. Finally, in *Photographic Memory*, seasonal landscapes are interwoven, shifted, and layered in sequences that insist on the tension between moving and still image. *Summer Salt* thus traces Steina's merging of analog and digital tools, and her project to strip the camera down to its essential physical nature.

Steina and Woody Vasulka: *Machine Media*
1998: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
Editor: Marika Sturken

Program Six **March 8 - 12, 1998**

Pictures of the Lost	25:00	1978
by Barbara Buckner		

'Pictures of the Lost' is a series of moving electronic "cliphers" depicting an inner spiritual journey. The original images for the work were captured with black and white cameras, then electronically altered with a video synthesizer, multiple keyers and other voltage-controlled devices. The Fairchild synthesizer produces a kind of light that can actually be seen in realms beyond the physical, much like light seen in dreams or those states between waking and sleeping. As a result, the synthesizer was very useful in depicting a spiritual landscape. For me, a spiritual landscape can include anything we see here on earth, and can also be a representation of things and people seen along a spiritual journey. The word "lost" in the title refers to me, as I felt lost before starting on a journey to spiritual freedom.

from EAI Catalog

'Pictures of the Lost' "depicts twenty-two states of spiritual unfoldment of an ongoing spiritual journey. Each of the twenty-two 'pictures' express an aspect of unfolding consciousness, or the soul's activities to know itself. They are depiction's of events occurring within, not physically seen or heard; correspondences between physical light/color/objects and invisible realities" -Buckner c.1981

from ETC files c.1981

Program Seven

March 13 - 19, 1988

Chott el-Djerid
by Bill Viola

28:00

1979

Chott el-Djerid is the name of a vast, dry salt lake in the Tunisian Sahara Desert where mirages are most likely to form in the midday sun. Here the intense desert heat manipulates, bends, and distorts the light rays to such an extent that you actually see things that are not there. Trees and sand dunes float off the ground, the edges of mountains and buildings ripple and vibrant, color and form blend into one shimmering dance. The desert mirages are set against images of the bleak winter prairies of Illinois and Saskatchewan, Canada, some of them recorded in a snowstorm. The opposite climactic conditions induce a similar aura of uncertainty, disorientation, and unfamiliarity. Through special telephoto lenses adapted for video, the camera confronts the final barrier of the limits of the image. At what point does the breakdown of normal conditions or the lack of adequate visual information cause us to reevaluate our perceptions of reality and realize that we are looking at something out the ordinary—a transformation of the physical into the psychological? If one believes that hallucinations are the manifestation of some chemical or biological imbalance in the brain, then mirages and desert heat distortions can be considered hallucinations of the landscape. It was like physically being inside someone else's dream.

Program Eight

March 20 - 26, 1988

First World Order
by Philip Mallory Jones

26:00

1994

In this tapestry of images and sounds, fragments gleaned from more than three years of research on four continents illuminate an ancient community of perceptions, practices, and values. Originating in Africa, thousands of years before Egypt, remnants of the first World Order survive today as codes and symbolic language in the arts and life of many people. Weaving verite sequences of arts and cultural expression with interviews and animation, Jones evokes the textured relationships of culturally and ethnically distinct and disparate peoples.

Program Nine

March 27 - April 3, 1998

Art of Memory
by Woody Vasulka

36:00

1987

Art of Memory is both a reflection on the discourse of history and the fragmentary experience of memory, while at the same time it explores the potential of the electronic image to become and object and depart from the two-dimensional video screen. This compelling work, which is comprised of image forms that radically redefine the electronic image, is concerned with the transposition of the photographic and cinematic into the electronic.

The subject of Art of yet not swallowing the images of the past. Art of Memory reflects on the fragmentary yet powerful capacity of memory to resurge, to present the voices and images of the past in new media with new meanings, and to re-configure the present. Images of the past haunt this work, speaking to the legacies of these violent and cataclysmic events. Art of Memory foregrounds the role of the camera in creating history, and reveals the capacity of electronic media to build upon and finally usurp the phenomenology of the media that preceded it.

Stalna and Woody Vasulka: Machine Media • 1996: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
Editor: Marita Sturken

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Image EA Catalog

Artists Biographical Information

Peer Boda

Professor of Media Arts at the School of Art and Design at Alfred University was also a visiting lecturer at the Center for Media Study at the University of Buffalo and recently guest lecturer at Kunstakademie in Oslo. He has served on peer review panels for the Media Program at the New York State Council on the Arts, the Finishing Funds Program of the Experimental Television Center and the Mid-a Program at the New York Foundation for the Arts, where he also served a three year term on the Board of Governors. His video and computer work has been widely exhibited internationally, most recently at Viper A Film Video and Multimedia Festival in Lucern, Switzerland and Impact Festival in the Netherlands. He has presented work at the University of Texas at Austin, the Knitting Factory, the Bodwell Museum, Brown University and Art in General. His work has also been selected for inclusion in *Surveying the First Decade: Video Art and Alternative Media in the US*, curated by Video Data Bank. He is Co-Director of the Institute for Electronic Arts at Alfred University.

Barbara Buckner

Since she began working with video in 1972, Barbara Buckner has employed advanced video and computer technologies to create painterly works of strong visual and symbolic resonance. Her formal exploration of the transformative properties of electronic image-processing technology result in metaphoric works of great pictorial sophistication. In her non-narrative, often alien compositions, Buckner's dense and elusive imagery hovers between abstraction and figuration, resulting in startling, mysterious manifestations of an otherworldly sensibility.

Buckner was born in 1950. She received a B.F.A. from New York University. She is the recipient of several National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, a New York State Council on the Arts grant, and a WNET/Thirteen grant. She has been artist-in-residence at City University of New York, the Experimental TV Center, Oswego, New York, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, among other institutions, and has taught at the School of Visual Arts, New York, New York University, New York.

from EA catalog.

B.F.A., New York University School of Film and Television. Buckner has taught at City College of New York, School of Visual Arts, Art Institute of Chicago, and most recently, New York University School of Film and Television. She has been recognized for her work in video by the New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, and Creative Artists' Public Service Program. Her work has been exhibited throughout the United States, including The Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum, Art Institute of Chicago, Anthology Film Archives, Video Free America, Global Village, and the Kitchen. Internationally, her work has been shown at the American Center in Paris and the International Video Art Festival in Kobe, Japan. Ms. Buckner has served as artist-in-residence at WXXI-TV in Rochester, New York, Video Free America in San Francisco, and WNET-TV in New York City.

Barbara Buckner's very personal videoworks are spiritual, poetic, and intriguing. Rich with metaphor and imagery, her highly processed pieces offer abstract visions of pre-conceived dreams.

from the ETG files c. 1981

Buckner resides in Minnesota where she is an independent consultant on new media production.

Michael Carmola

A leader in the independent film movement in Eastern New York, Carmola is the organizer of Upstate Independent Network, a large and growing salon of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. He is the founder of Videos for Change Productions, an independent video production company established in 1992. He has studied filmmaking and videography at a number of workshops and classes in New York City with nationally famous narrative and documentary filmmakers. *Blue Line* has been awarded Best Short Documentary at the New York State Capital Film Slam. His nine other video productions have also been well received and served as a technical training ground for this well-made production on which he filled the roles of writer, producer, director, editor, and camera operator. The filmmaker resides with his wife, Linda, in Delanson, N.Y. U.S.A.

Inside the Blue Line was selected Best Short Documentary in the 1996 New York State Capital Film Slam and received a Certificate of Merit for Short Documentary at the 38th Rochester International Amateur Film Festival.

Phil Jones

Philip Matthey Jones has been working in video as an art medium since 1969, and has incorporated digital tools since 1990. His work has been broadcast and presented in international exhibitions in North America, the Caribbean, South America, Europe, Africa, and Australia. He was co-founder and Director of Ithaca Video Projects (1971-84), one of the pioneer media art centers, and Director/Curator of the Annual Ithaca Video Festival (1975-84), the first touring collection of video art. In 1989, he curated and premiered ICQNO NEGRO: The Black Aesthetic in Video Art, at the Long Beach Museum of Art.

His work has been supported by the American Film Institute, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, Western States Regional Media Arts Program, National Black Programming Consortium, Television Laboratory at WNET/13, the Smithsonian Institution, Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Independent Television Service, Whitney Museum of American Art, American Center in Paris, Arizona State University, and other agencies.

Mr. Jones' videography includes both single channel and multi-channel installation work. The installations include MASK (1991), DREAMKEEPER (1989), FOOTPRINTS (1986), and GHOSTS & DEMONS (1987). The single-channel work includes ALCHEMY (1996) Interactive CD-ROM, FIRST WORLD ORDER (1994), PARADIGM SHIFT (1992), WASSA (1989), WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND (1986), SOLDIERS OF A RECENT AND FORGOTTEN WAR (1981), EXTRA ROOMS (1980), BLACKWHITE & MARRIED (1979), IN THE PICTURES (1978), JAN: TAKE 2 (1977), THE TROUBLE I'VE SEEN (1976), NO CRYSTAL STAIR (1975), BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS, MORE MOUNTAINS (1975), ST. LOUIS BLUES VIDEOMATION (1973), III (1971), among others.

Mr. Jones has been consultant to the S.F. Museum of Modern Art (1996), National Alliance for Media Arts & Culture (1996), Rockefeller Foundation (1995), MacArthur Foundation (1995), American Film Institute, 1994; Phoenix Arts Commission, 1993; College Art Association, Studio Conference, 1991; International Center for Photography, 1990; Pittsburgh Filmmakers Fellowship Program, 1990; Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA, 1989; Washington Project for the Arts, D.C., 1989; Commission for Racial Justice, United Church of Christ, Angola Mission, 1988; World Institute of Black Communications, NYC, 1988; Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 1987-88; New York State Council on the Arts, 1987, 1975-79; New York State Dept. of Education, 1984-85; Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 1980; Rockefeller Foundation, 1979; Artists Foundation of Boston, 1979; WNET/13 TV Lab, 1979; National Endowment for the Arts, 1976-79; Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC, 1975-76; Creative Artists Public Service Program (1973-75).

Mr. Jones' academic credentials include the MFA in Creative Writing from Cornell University, 1971. He has been on the faculties of Ithaca College, Howard University, and the State University of New York College at Fredonia. He is currently Artist-in-Residence at the Institute for Studies in the Arts, and Senior Lecturer in the College of Fine Arts, Arizona State University.

Mr. Jones' current projects include, FIRST WORLD ORDER, explores modes of symbolic communication, perception, and expression in "First World" societies, as descriptors for a global community based on ancient systems of knowledge and wisdom. This work will be broadcast internationally, published as interactive CD-ROM, and presented as a resource site on the World Wide Web. He is also collaborating on an opera, DOXOLOGY, with Paul Carter Harrison, Wendell Logan, Israel Hicins, Donald Byrd, and Oliver Jackson.

Jeffrey Lerer

Jeffrey Lerer's animation and multi-media projects have been exhibited for the past ten years at locations across the country, including the Bennett Siegel Gallery in New York City. His work "3 Thicker Slot" was included in the PBS nationwide broadcast of "The 90's (It's Debatable)". His teaching engagements have included the Fashion Institute of Technology (NYC) and designing several advanced courses for Pratt Institute Manhattan. Public funding and grants have come from NYFA, ETC, and The Fund for Innovative TV. Lerer has a BA in Political Science and Psychology from the University of Arizona.

Kristin Lucas

Kristin Lucas holds a BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. Her work has been included in group exhibitions internationally for the past year. She has received artist residencies at ETC, Harvestworks, and at the Maria Walsh Sharpe Foundation Studio Space Program.

Mary Lucier

Lucier was born in 1944. She received a B.A. from Brandeis University. Among her many awards are a Guggenheim Fellowship and an American Film Institute Independent Filmmaker Grant, as well as grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. She has been artist-in-residence at the Capp Street Project, San Francisco, and the Television Laboratory at WNET/Thirteen, New York, and has taught at New York University, the San Francisco Art Institute, the Cleveland Institute of Art, Minnesota College of Art and Design, and the School of Visual Arts, New York. Lucier has had solo exhibitions at The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford; Capp Street Project, San Francisco; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Dallas Museum of Art; Madison Art Center, Wisconsin; and Greenburg-Wilson Gallery, New York. Her work has also been exhibited in group shows at festivals and institutions including the American Film Institute National Video Festival, Los Angeles; Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial, New York; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Artspace, Sydney; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. She lives in New York.

Branda Miller

An internationally recognized video artist, educator and media activist, Branda Miller is Associate Professor of Electronic Arts at Rensselaer. Focusing on the relationship of art, technology and community, she experiments with media to support independent voices, explore new visions and stimulate critical perspectives.

Miller's media art works have been screened at festivals, museums and exhibitions, broadcast nationally and internationally, and used extensively in community organizing and education. She is the recipient of many grants, including National Endowment of the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, Paul Robeson Fund, Andy Warhol Foundation, and Nathan Cummings Foundation.

Miller is the electronic author of Witness to the Future, an interactive hybrid media project including a CD-ROM newly published by The Voyager Co. The project, designed as a model for media activism, integrates a video documentary, the environmental classic Silent Spring by Rachel Carson, over 500 up datable links to the world wide web, a web site, and accompanying curricula. The video is also being distributed as an organizing tool on VHS by The Video Project.

Professor Miller is recognized for her development of media literacy and community education projects using electronic arts and media production. For the past four summers, she has led workshops for the Five College Institute for Media Literacy, designed to educate primary and secondary teachers on how to use media in the classroom. She has collaborated with several community and youth groups around the country in Empowerment Video Workshops, including award-winning We Have the Force, The Birth of a Candy Bar, talkin' bout droppin' out!!!, and Whats Up? She is also the co-editor of the manual TV EYE: Media Analysis and Independent Production, distributed by Boston Film Video Foundation.

Media activist projects include producing/editing "Art of the State/State of the Art?", National Arts Emergency, and Cori: A Struggle for Life. She developed free distribution, with accompanying curricular support, as part of the design for using media art as an educational tool for community empowerment.

Professor Miller has also been a creative consultant to diverse artistic and social and political projects in the independent media making field. She is on the Board of Directors of the Lyn Blumenthal Fund for Independent Film and Video, and has participated in numerous panels, juries, and conferences. At Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Professor Miller is also Executive Producer of the Satellite Series In a Word, with Technology, and Executive Producer of HOUR IEAR, a weekly cable series in the Capital District region of NY which is in its twelfth season and reaches a potential audience of 200,000.

Her work has received awards including first place in numerous festivals including Atlanta Film & Video Festival, 3 Rivers Video Festival, National Latino Festival and Silver Medal at the Locarno International Film and Video Festival and Special Merit at the San Sebastian Video Festival.

She is also an Emmy award winning editor who has worked extensively in the media industry of Los Angeles and New York City, creating her mark on diverse projects ranging from feature films, television series, national network specials, and industrials to video walls and interactive video discs.

John Orentlicher

John Orentlicher holds a MFA in Sculpture from School of the Art Institute in Chicago, Illinois. He has taught at Syracuse University, Dept. of Art Media Studies for the past twenty years. He is the recipient of many Fulbright Scholar Awards and has traveled extensively as a visiting artist. His video/film work have been exhibited in Spain, Argentina, Chile, Canada and many locations nationally.

Dave Ryan

Dave Ryan is a professor of video and filmmaking at Pittsburgh Filmmakers. He holds a masters degree from Ohio University. His work has been screened both nationally and internationally over the last several years. He was previously the Director of Operations at Pittsburgh Filmmakers, one of the largest media arts centers in the country.

Steina Vasulka

Steina was born Steinunn Briem Bjarnadóttir in Reykjavik, Iceland, in 1940. She studied violin and music theory and in 1959 received a scholarship from the Czechoslovak Ministry of Culture to attend the State Music Conservatory in Prague.

Woody and Steina married in Prague in 1964, and shortly thereafter she joined the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra. After moving to the United States in 1965 she worked in New York as a freelance musician. The Vasulkas began working with video in 1969 and in 1971, with Andres Mannik, they founded The Kitchen, an electronic media theater. Since 1980 they live in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

With Woody, Steina has been an artist in residence at the National Center for Experiments in Television (NCET) at KQED in San Francisco and at WNET/Thirteen in New York. She has received funding from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Guggenheim Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Film Institute and the New Mexico Arts Division. In 1988 she was an artist-in-residence in Tokyo on a U.S./Japan Friendship Committee grant. She received the AFI Maya Deren Award in 1992 and the Siemens Media Art Prize in 1995. Under the auspices of Montevideo in Amsterdam her various installations have been shown in and outside Holland. In 1996 she and Woody Vasulka will show an eight media installation at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, a show repeated in Santa Fe a few months later. She recently served for a year as the artistic co-director at Stelm Institute in Holland. She is the current representative of Iceland at the Venice Biennale.

Woody Vasulka

Woody Vasulka was born Bohuslav Peter Vasulka in Brno, Czechoslovakia in 1937. After graduating from a technical school, he was placed in a nearby factory. Dissatisfied with his lot, he tried for the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague to study film. Several documentary films later he graduated and moved in 1965 to New York with his wife Steina. For a few years Woody freelanced as an editor for various large format multi-screen projects. Upon encountering half-inch video "portapak" in 1969, he quit film to dedicate himself fully to working with electronic media.

In 1971 with Steina and Andres Mannik, he founded The Kitchen, an electronic media theater in NYC. The same year, under Electronic Art Internix's umbrella he formed with Steina and Eric Siegel the group Perception, which was supported by the New York State Council on the Arts. After some pioneering work in video, he moved to Buffalo in 1973 to become a professor at the Center for Media Study. In 1978 he bought a DEC LSI-11 computer, which inspired him to build together with Jeffrey Schier "The Digital Image Articulator", a digital video image processor. In 1980 he left his teaching position for New Mexico where he continues his investigation into "The New Epistemic Space". Since 1993, he is also a visiting professor at the Faculty of Arts of the Polytechnic Institute in his home town, Brno, Czech Republic.

In 1992 under a commission from Peter Weibel, the Vasulkas curated "Eigenwelt der Apparate Welt: Pioneers of Electronic Art", an exhibition of early electronic art toolmakers for Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria, with a videodisk interactive catalogue. With Steina, Woody has been an artist in residence at the National Center for Experiments in Television (NCET) at KQED in San Francisco and at WNET/Thirteen in New York. He has received funding from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), Creative Artists Public Service (CAPS), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Guggenheim Foundation, and the New Mexico Arts Division, American Film Institute's Maya Deren Award and in 1995 Siemens-Medienkunstpreis.

He has participated in major video festivals worldwide, given lectures, published articles, composed music and made numerous video tapes. Since his move to Santa Fe in 1980, he has completed two major video tapes, *The Commission and Art of Memory* and three large scale installations, *Theater of Hybrid Automata* and *Table III & Table I* from his machine cycle *Brotherhood*. Currently, he is working on the completion of the his *Brotherhood* series with a commission of constructing three *Tables for InterCommunication* Center in Tokyo.

With Steina, for over three decades now, he has maintained his presence on the international media art scene, formulating and articulating esthetic strategies of the new media.

Bill Viola

Bill Viola is a contemporary artist who uses video and electronic media to explore the phenomena of sense perception as a language of the body and avenue to self-knowledge. He has integrated many disciplines and philosophies to present a broad view of contemporary art's relevance to the modern world, a view which has firm roots in the history of both Western and Eastern art.

Primarily known for his work with video images, since 1973 he has created videotapes, architectural video installations, sound environments, electronic music performances, and works for television broadcast. He has exhibited his video artworks at major museums worldwide, and has been instrumental in the establishment of video as an accepted form of contemporary art. A survey exhibition of his work at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, (1987) was the first time that museum devoted several galleries to the work of a video artist. His videotapes and installations can be found in many prominent museum and private collections throughout the world, and his tapes have been shown internationally on public television and distributed nationally on home video.

In 1994, he created a film for a live concert tour of Edgard Varese's *Deserts* by the Ensemble Modern (*Deserts*), and in 1996 was selected to represent the United States at the 46th Venice Biennale (*Buried Secrets* 1995). He was recently commissioned by the Chaplaincy to the Arts and Recreation to create a video installation piece for the 900 year old Durham Cathedral in Northern England (*The Messenger*, 1996), which became the first major work of contemporary video art to be acquired by an institution of the Church of England.

A book of his collected writings from 1973 to 1994, *Reasons for Knocking at an Empty House*, was published in 1996 in the U.S. by MIT Press (in the U.K. Thames & Hudson) and the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London.

Born in New York January 25, 1951, Viola received his BFA from Syracuse University (1973). He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Syracuse University in 1995, and The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1997. He works at his studio in Long Beach, California, where he lives with his wife and studio manager Kira Perov and their two children.